

**TARGETED STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION 2023 RULE OF LAW REPORT  
UN HUMAN RIGHTS REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE (OHCHR)**

**FRANCE REVIEW**

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**III. Media freedom and pluralism**

**C. Framework for journalists' protection, transparency and access to documents**

***Other – Please specify***

**Racist and discriminatory discourse in the media and on the Internet** - In its 2022 concluding observations, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination stressed its concern with regard to the persistent and widespread racist and discriminatory discourse, especially in the media and on the Internet, with particular reference to some political leaders' racist remarks against certain ethnic minorities, in particular Roma, Travellers, Africans, people of African descent, people of Arab origin and non-citizens. It asked France to redouble its efforts to effectively prevent and combat racist hate speech through effective legislation enforcement and to punish all manifestations of racism and race-based hate on public platforms ([CERD/C/FRA/CO/22-23](#), paras 11 - 12).

**IV. Other institutional issues related to checks and balances**

**D. The enabling framework for civil society**

*Rules and practices having an impact on the effective operation and safety of civil society organisations and human rights defenders. This includes measures for protection from attacks – verbal, physical or online –, intimidation, legal threats incl. SLAPPs, negative narratives or smear campaigns, measures capable of affecting the public perception of civil society organisations, etc. It also includes measures to monitor threats or attacks and dedicated support services.*

In its 2022 concluding observations, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination stressed its concern over the fact that human rights defenders are subjected to intimidation and threats, in particular when they cooperated with the Committee, which constituted an obstacle to its proper functioning. In this context, it noted in particular reports that Assa Traoré, who provided information about her brother, had been the victim of defamatory messages and threats online, in particular on social media accounts of police unions. The Committee recommended therefore that France take the necessary measures to protect human rights defenders against threats and reprisals, including immediate and effective measures to guarantee the safety of Assa Traoré and appropriate measures to bring to justice State agents associated with messages of intimidation and threats she was subject to ([CERD/C/FRA/CO/22-23](#), paras 27-28).

**E. Initiatives to foster a rule of law culture**

***Other – please specify***

**Accountability of law enforcement authorities**

In its 2022 concluding observations, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed concern over the frequent use by police and other law enforcement officers of identity checks, discriminatory arrests and fixed penalties to disproportionately target certain minorities, especially Africans, people of African descent, people of Arab origin, Roma, Travellers and non-citizens. It asked France to ensure that racial and ethnic profiling is clearly defined and prohibited in

legislation and to provide clear operational guidelines to all law enforcement officials ([CERD/C/FRA/CO/22-23](#), paras 23 - 24).

The Committee also expressed its deep concern about the number of reported cases of excessive use of force and ill-treatment, including physical and verbal abuse, inflicted by law enforcement officials on members of certain minority groups, in particular people of African descent or of Arab origin, Roma, Travelers and foreigners. In this respect, the Committee called on France to ensure prompt, full and impartial investigations into all cases of racist incidents instigated by or involving police officers, effective remedies and redress for victims of excessive use of force by law enforcement officials as well as improved data collection and reporting mechanisms. It further recommended steps to promote ethnic diversity within the police and effective measures to prevent excessive use of force, ill-treatment and abuse of authority by the police against members of minority groups, such as training for human rights ([CERD/C/FRA/CO/22-23](#), paras 25 - 26).